

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of this response. Claims 1, 3, 5-10, 12-15 and 17-53 are currently pending in connection with the present application. By way of this response, claims 2, 4, 11 and 16 have been canceled; claims 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12-15, 17-19 and 28 have been amended, and claims 29-53 have been added. Claims 1, 3, 5, 10 and 44 are independent claims.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of the allowable subject matter set forth in claims 2, 3, 5-8, 16-18, 20 and 22-27. By way of this response, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include subject matter somewhat similar to that previously set forth in claim 2; rewritten claim 3 in independent form; added claim 44, which is essentially claim 7 rewritten in independent form, and rewritten claim 5 into independent form including all limitations previously set forth in base claim 1 and intervening claim 4. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 3, 5 and 44 are in condition for allowance.

Furthermore, Applicants have amended claim 10 and further added new independent claims 51-53, which are dependent upon claims 3, 5 and 44, respectively. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also

in condition for allowance at least by virtue of their dependency on independent claims 3, 5 and 44.

Further still, Applicants respectfully submit that although several claims may be allowable for somewhat similar reasons, each claim should be governed solely by the limitations presented therein and not by any other claim.

DRAWINGS

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's acceptance of the drawings filed March 15, 2004.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Applicants acknowledge and thank the Examiner for the careful consideration of all references listed on the Information Disclosure Statements filed October 17, 2003 and January 20, 2004, as indicated by the Examiner's initials and signature on each of the forms PTO-1449.

PRIORITY DOCUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the acknowledgement of Applicants' claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 and the indication that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received by the USPTO.

ABSTRACT

On page 2 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the Abstract because, "it is formatted as more than one paragraph."

By way of this response, Applicants have amended the Abstract taking into account the suggestions and comments made by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the above objection.

PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 4, 9-15, 19, 21 and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Tam (U.S. Patent No. 6,130,930). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, especially in view of claims 1, 5 and 10 as now amended.

As discussed above, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 10 to include subject matter somewhat similar to that which was indicated as allowable on page 4 of the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 10 are in condition for allowance.

With regard to claims 9, 11-15, 19, 21 and 28, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 1.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the above rejections.

COMMENTS ON REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

On page 2 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner offers reasons why claims 2, 3, 5-8, 16-18, 20 and 22-27 of the present application are allowable over the prior art of record. Although Applicants agree that the various claimed limitations mentioned in the claims are not taught or suggested by the prior art taken either singly or in combination, Applicants wish to emphasize that it is the language of each claim including the interrelationships and interconnections between various claimed elements which is allowable over the prior art of record, and not the Examiner's paraphrasing and/or generalization of claim features, which may not be present in one or more of the claims indicated as allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of above remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

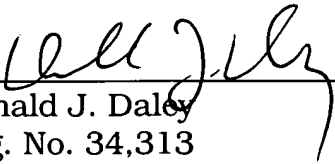
If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Andrew M. Waxman, Reg. No. 56,007, at the number of the undersigned listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit

Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§
1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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